

VERY REVEREND MONSIGNOR CHARLES ALVIN KEKUMANO

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The Very Reverend Charles Kekumano, the first Hawaiian Catholic priest, describes the childhood influences that inspired him to enter a seminary in California following his graduation from St. Louis High School. Shortly after his return to Hawaii, he was urged to obtain his doctorate in canon law, thus enabling him to serve as chancellor of the diocese.

Monsignor Kekumano tells of his pastoral duties, both here and in Alaska, his lifelong interest in the Hawaiian language, and his active participation in community organizations throughout the years.

His position as trustee of the Liliuokalani Trust enables him to combine the experience of his ministry with his deep concern for the children of Hawaii.

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INTERVIEW WITH MONSIGNOR CHARLES ALVIN KEKUMANO

At his office in the Queen Liliuokalani Children's Center

April 11, 1986

K: Monsignor Kekumano

S: Alice Sinesky, Interviewer

K: First of all, I was born in Kona, actually on the shores of Kealahou Bay, and the old family home was directly across from the Captain Cook monument. I should not have been born there because the family had moved to Honolulu, but my grandfather had this notion that his grandchild should be born at the old place and those were the days of the inter-island ships, the little things that went from island to island--obviously very rough in the channels. Anyway, my mother and I were carted over there so that I could be born at the old place.

The only one living in the old house at the time was my great-grandmother, who was then almost ninety, and I was born there with those two ladies. My mother had been very sickly and, at that time, became much more sickly. Consequently, the word came back to Honolulu that she was not doing well, so my grandmother came over and brought me back to Honolulu. I was then two weeks old.

There was a peculiar problem. My mother apparently had been given some medicine to be put into my milk so that I would be stronger or whatever. Her Hawaiian was very limited. My great-grandmother did not speak English and so, misunderstanding the directions and getting the medicine bottle, she got the wrong one and didn't recognize or didn't even understand, I guess, the sign of poisonous on it. Consequently, I was, according to my grandmother, terribly bloated and completely black and blue from head to foot. She brought me to Honolulu and took me to the family doctor, old Dr. Christopher O'Day, and he examined me and said, "Oh my, it's too late. It's a question of how much of this poison will filter through the system and actually affect the heart. The child cannot live."

My grandmother was Catholic; my grandfather was Episcopalian, but not a practicing one. Actually, it was my stepgrandmother because my real grandmother had died at childbirth and my grandfather had married again. And so this

stepgrandmother took me home from the doctor's and said, "Well, we'll do the best we can under these circumstances." I couldn't eat anything; nothing would stay down, not even water. Consequently, my grandmother concocted a potion consisting of poi--a poi cocktail--mixed with milk, and would give me a spoonful every hour or two to suck on. In a couple of weeks she took me back to the doctor who was amazed that I was doing so well, that I had survived.

The interesting aspect is that my grandfather, of course, was full-blooded Hawaiian with a tremendous respect for everything that was Hawaiian. I remember, for example, when I was five years old, my cousins and I, all of his grandchildren, were taken to Kona to visit my great-grandmother and we were schooled before we left Honolulu by him as to how to address her in Hawaiian. So we learned these expressions in Hawaiian, to speak to her very politely and how you said it to your grandmother and how you said it with respect. Very early in my life I picked up a deep respect for not only the Hawaiian words, but the way you used them and the differences of your speaking to someone who's of the family, someone your own age, someone who has earned or deserves respect and so forth.

My grandmother, stepgrandmother, was part-Hawaiian. She also had German and Spanish in her. She raised me from then on. My mother never completely recovered and I saw her only a few times. I always saw her in bed. I was only allowed to come in and I was held up in mid-air over the bed and, "Say 'hello' to your mother," and answer a few questions and put down and told to go outside and play.

S: Did you have any brothers or sisters?

K: No, I was an only child--first and only. And consequently, my only conclusion--although I don't remember any discussions at the time--my only conclusion is that she probably was slowly dying of cancer and that there was a concern of my not attaching any of the stench that sometimes comes from cancer. That's the only reason I can judge for the peculiar conduct of only being allowed to come in for a minute or two, say "Hello" and then go outside--that I would not have a bad memory of her. All I remember of her, really, is lying in bed.

My grandmother spoke Hawaiian--in fact, they spoke Hawaiian only among themselves, when they didn't want the children or grandchildren to know what they were talking about. Consequently, we never learned Hawaiian as children, but I enjoyed the pronunciations and the flow of Hawaiian words, and to this day remember the way my grandmother said certain words or what words she used with regard to certain individuals. So while the word means one thing, when you attach it to somebody, it takes on a slightly different

connotation. Consequently, that early in life, I developed a deep sense of what was correct in Hawaiian and how you used certain words.

I was sent to St. Louis, which in those days went from first grade all the way through high school, and we were taught only by brothers. The brothers of Mary wore a long French--Prince Albert coat--that was their religious garb. And consequently, for twelve years then this strong male influence of men who dedicated themselves to service, to helping others, had a great impact on my life. I had a great respect for these brothers as I went through all the grades and finally graduated. At the time when I graduated in 1937 from St. Louis, our class was the largest to graduate up to that time. Of course, since that time they've practically doubled the number, but 133 seniors graduating was a great thing in those days.

My grandfather had died in the meantime. I went to the seminary because of my interest in that kind of life. And also being surrounded by the priests of the parishes who were Belgian, who had come out here from Belgium, and again this whole sense of dedication. They gave themselves completely, they were not married and their whole life was helping people and I was very impressed with all of this.

S: Did you have aunts, uncles, cousins, family?

K: Yes, lots of cousins. I still have all kinds of cousins all over the place and, as years go on, I keep picking up more somehow or the other. More people approach me and say, "We're related," and I'm trying to figure out how this is all possible.

But I then went to California to the seminary and was away ten years in the seminary, during which time my seminary training was in southern California, primarily, and in the old missions of California. Hence, I think I developed a sense of history and respect for the old culture, the Spanish culture of California, and I think that had an impact on the course of my life.

Finally I returned home only because Hawaii had changed --it was no longer considered a missionary area in the Church--and now we had our own bishop and everything here, and I had met him and he had persuaded me to transfer from the mainland, leaving the Franciscan order to join the diocese of Hawaii.

S: Where were you ordained?

K: Well, then I returned. Because of this I returned to Honolulu and was ordained by Bishop Sweeney, who was the first bishop here as an independent bishop of the diocese.

My first appointment also was a little bit strange in the sense that it also had an impact. But it was on a small plantation parish primarily, as far as the Catholic population was concerned, Filipino and Portuguese. It was in a very small area on Maui at Paia and the plantation has been completely shut down since then. But those were the early days in which the garbage and everything else ran through an open sewer through the villages and I had a chance to see this before it completely disappeared.

And I also had a chance to work with Filipinos who were very new to Hawaii, or whose parents had come, and they were growing up in a whole new culture and environment. And so the relationship to that kind of background which I had never been exposed to before--now I only spent a year and a half there. Right after that, I was brought back to Honolulu and was asked to go away to get a doctor's degree in church law. The bishop needed a canon lawyer in church law with him so that everything he did was correct as far as the church was concerned.

So I was sent back to Washington, D. C. to the Catholic University of America and studied there for three years to get my doctorate and then returned home. As a result of that, I was immediately taken into the administration of the church here in the Islands. Now the church is quite large--it's almost one third of the population of Hawaii and, therefore, being involved in the administration of sixty-four parishes and, in those days, we had over five hundred nuns here, we had a hundred and eighty priests--the church was very large and vibrant in those days. It was an interesting part of my life to be involved in the administration. I lived with the bishop--was his secretary besides being chancellor for the diocese.

That went on for years. When he died, I asked to be given a parish, and so I went then into parish work serving in Manoa, down at the cathedral, then volunteered for Wailuku, Maui. While I was on Maui--by that time I'm getting on in years and no longer practicing canon law--a classmate of mine had been made bishop of the small diocese of Juneau, Alaska, and we corresponded mostly at Christmas time when we put a note on the bottom of a Christmas card, and that was the sum total of our correspondence. But I, unfortunately at that stage, put a note down saying that in looking at the statistics for his diocese, I found out that I, as dean of the Catholic church on Maui, had more parishes, more priests and more Catholics under me than he had in his diocese of Juneau. And thought I was being facetious.

I got back from this Irishman a very strongly-worded letter that said, "If you're doing that well, why don't you use some of your canon law and help out a poor diocese? I don't have a canon lawyer." And I thought this would be

interesting. I was no longer functioning as a canon lawyer in that sense of being active in it, so I volunteered. The bishop here didn't think too kindly of it; he thought that was very strange. But I volunteered for one to three years and went up there.

The diocese was very small, was very scattered. I helped in parishes besides doing canon law work, which was primarily annulment work for marriages. The church with Vatican II had begun to see the divorce situation and the marriage situation in a new light because of what was happening in society. And so the whole question of adapting to it. We now realized that very many marriages taking place were not true marriages as we understood marriage and, therefore, if a person entered that kind of a system and later it didn't work, could they be in good standing in the Catholic church? And so we did a lot of that kind of work.

I did that touring all of Alaska to explain the system to the priests of the various changes since Vatican II. And doing that work in one of the three dioceses in Alaska and enjoyed the work and enjoyed living there--the many challenges of living in a small community. I was stationed for a while in a small fishing village of no more than 3,000 people, which was primarily Norwegian and primarily Lutheran. And it was all very interesting to be part of this.

I would also fly out in these little planes to an Indian village with a few schoolteachers and so forth who were Catholics--fly out to logging camps--so you'd end up in a community with maybe six Catholics. I'd go out to minister to them and then return back to my fishing town. And then besides, I'd do my canon law work. So it was all very interesting.

S: Did the change in climate bother you or did you just accept that?

K: No, you accept it and, furthermore, I was in Juneau which is further south. It's not the severity of Fairbanks or anything up north, and when I was up in Fairbanks, the lowest it was for me was 15 degrees. It can get to 80 degrees below zero. So I didn't mind it--I rather liked it. I'm now spoiled. I like air conditioning in Hawaii as a result of all this business.

Then came the question of retirement because when I was ordained a priest, my salary was thirty dollars a month. Consequently, because of that and because of the system I never went on Social Security. If you got sick, you went to a Catholic doctor who didn't send you a bill; you went to a Catholic hospital--they didn't send you a bill. You never adverted to all this. Well, times have changed and, consequently, the moment I reached sixty-five I realized I

could be faced with a terrible financial problem if I got sick. And since I was attached to the small diocese of Juneau, I told the bishop there that if I got seriously sick, he would have a hard time trying to take care of all these bills. He would have to go out of Alaska and do a lot of preaching and raising money to take care of these bills and that bothered me. And so I was offered a chance to come back to Hawaii to retire and get a job at the same time that would be not contradictory to but would be the same kind of ministry that I was doing as a priest, so that I could remain a priest but would not necessarily have a parish but could do a job on the side.

So here I find myself as a trustee for Queen Liliuokalani's estate and, therefore, I do have medical coverage with the estate and I do have a salary that maintains me so that I am not beholden to anyone. I'm able to survive. Now looking back then over these sixty-seven years--these various chapters of my life, these various phases, obviously made a strong impact.

For example, when I first returned as a priest, there was lots of interest in this Hawaiian, the first Hawaiian to become a Catholic priest, and, therefore, I was invited to lots of Hawaiian functions and became more and more active, particularly with the Hawaiian Civic Club movement, which was growing and at that time had reached the stage of thirty-two Hawaiian civic clubs across the state.

S: Approximately what year was this?

K: It was in the fifties, the 1950s. I came home with my degree in 1954. I became president of the Hawaiian Civic Club of Honolulu, which was the mother club, and eventually became president of the Association of all the Hawaiian Civic Clubs. I was very active in this and as a result was invited to other Hawaiian things--served in many ways.

I still don't speak Hawaiian. I understand it if I really pay attention to it. I'm not particularly concerned about learning Hawaiian because there are very few people to talk to, and I don't see the point of going through all of this. What I am concerned about--my interest in the Hawaiian language--is the real understanding of the words.

I had a grandaunt once that I went to visit as a young priest and said, "I'm asked to give an invocation and would I do it in Hawaiian. So this is what I want to say and this is how I've translated it." So I showed it to her and in typical Hawaiian polite style she looked at it and said, "Now this is nice, very nice, but this is not the way the Hawaiians would say it." And so then she translates my English into another Hawaiian and explains why they would say it this way and why they would use these kind of adjectives

and so forth. Well, from then on I became very concerned about the use of words. Consequently, very few Hawaiians will speak to me today in Hawaiian because they are under the impression that I speak a very classical, a very good Hawaiian, and that theirs is not that good, and so they're embarrassed to speak to me. As a matter of fact, I wouldn't be able to answer them anyway.

But I have devoted a lot of time to a consideration of Hawaiian words and particularly place names and personal names. It's not easy to translate these and, therefore, if you try to understand what the words really mean, you get some other senses to it. I do this sometimes with Hawaiian songs, particularly the older Hawaiian songs. I can take a song and translate it twice or three different times in three different ways, depending on who is doing the singing, who is the composer and so on and so forth.

Sometimes it sounds like the composer is just describing a very lovely young lady that he met, say in Kohala, and he writes a song about her. Now that may be true, but it may have been actually his girlfriend living there and if it is really his genuine girlfriend that he's really interested in, the words have a slightly different meaning. Now, on the other hand, if he has fallen in love with Kohala with this one visit and now describes Kohala as a very beautiful maiden, then the song can be translated in this light. So when you get this kind of a feel, which is not always easy, but when you get this kind of a feel, Hawaiian has a depth to it that is extremely beautiful and fascinating. So I do a lot of this from time to time on my own.

I also am interested in place names. I find it very interesting that some of the names that are in places don't seem to make sense, and yet when you look at it very, very carefully, it's the only name that that place could have. Let me use an example; I was on Maui--oh, this would be in the early 1960s--visiting the Hawaiian Civic Club there and they had this luau and at the head table sitting next to me was an elderly Hawaiian, all gray and very dignified, and in the course of conversation I said to him, "You know, I've been trying to get a good translation of the word Kaanapali, but every translation I get seems kind of strange. Why would the Hawaiians call a place by that name?" And I said, "You've lived here all your life. What is the meaning of Kaanapali as far as you know?" And he said, "You know, I really don't speak Hawaiian that well and I don't know what the real or the original translation is, but, you know, my father never called it Kaanapali." And I said, "Oh my, what did he call it?" thinking we were going to get an older word that would be much more significant. He said, "No, he always pronounced it differently. He used to say Kaa-napali." "Oh, I said, "that changes the meaning completely." Napali now is the plural, therefore, the cliffs; kaa, the rolling cliffs. And

if you approach Maui from that end, approach the Lahaina area, you have these tremendous rolling hills and they're very noticeable now because of the sugar cane on all of them, but these rolling hills--that's what Kaanapali means.

Now from that I've gone to other aspects. I'm convinced that most place names in Hawaii were given by the Hawaiians going from place to place on their canoes, and when you wanted to land you land at a place where there was the rolling hills. So many or most place names are descriptions as seen from the ocean.

For example, Pearl Harbor was known as Puuloa, which doesn't make sense at all. It has nothing to do with the water; nothing to do with the harbor. Puuloa would mean a long hill. Now when you're out on the water looking into Pearl Harbor area, there is the Pearl Ridge, as we call it today, and that's what Puuloa means. It's the long ridge that sets back of the water. So as I say, by doing this kind of research, asking around with the old-timers and so forth, I've picked up a lot of this information. I enjoy that. So it's added to my expertise, if you want, in giving Hawaiian talks and a feel for the deeper sense of what Hawaiians were doing and talking about.

S: As far as the Hawaiian music goes, are you musical in the sense that you play a particular instrument?

K: The whole family was musical, but unfortunately, I guess I was overshadowed by my cousins who were very musical. I had a cousin who was learning piano when we were kids, teenagers, and became quite the expert. I had another cousin, her sister, was a violinist. And consequently, I was always overshadowed by these cousins who were doing so well. I got into the St. Louis school band from seventh grade on and got to the point where I was playing seven different instruments. I would fill in for people, but you know band instruments are not that conducive to Hawaiian music, so I never really learned Hawaiian music and never learned to play the ukulele. The instrument I loved the most was the piano and I can't play the piano because I was overshadowed by my cousin.

But it's not so much the melody in the Hawaiian music that I'm interested in as the words. Hawaiians can say things in their music so beautifully. Once in a great while at gatherings you will notice suddenly that some older Hawaiian breaks out into laughter or has a tremendous big smile. They've watched the hula dancer or they've listened to the way the words were pronounced and the way the singer conveyed the Hawaiian and they've gotten a new translation. So that you can convey to one another--the same words can convey different images and I enjoy studying that kind of thing. I guess partly because of my study of languages--I

did study Latin, of course, Greek, Hebrew, Spanish and German--so because of the interest in languages I have now focused a lot of attention on Hawaiian.

S: Have you done anything with Hawaiian poetry?

K: Not really unless it happened to come through with a song.

S: Because I've heard similar comments as you were saying about one, two or possibly three meanings--it's the same thing.

K: The words lend themselves to that. Hawaiian words--well, to move back--the Hawaiian vocabulary is so limited. It's got only twelve letters and, therefore, it's the smallest alphabet in the world. The possible combinations are very limited. I guess it would be more correct to describe the Hawaiian language more as a notional language. There is no word for glass--a drinking glass. There is no word for coffee cup, but you have a container for the drinking of, so that they do it by circumlocution. And when you do it by circumlocution, it opens up various possibilities--what words you would use under certain circumstances. And is it your grandmother's favorite coffee cup as distinguished from a new coffee cup on the shelf? So that they allude to so many things and when they're going to write their songs--and they write the songs about almost anything--I guess, in English if you translated it exactly, they sound kind of crass or very common. When you hear it in Hawaiian, it isn't that crass.

Let me use an example--Lena Machado in the old days--in the thirties, forties and fifties when she sang, there was a favorite song that told about--the lady addresses a girl and says, "You know, I remember when you were a little girl, all dirty, and your nose was running and so forth, and now look at you, you're such a beautiful girl." Well, this incident ends up in a very lovely song and I suppose in trying to translate it you'd have this translation and somebody would say, "What on earth is this all about?" But if you can see the older lady's appreciation and when she describes the child as an infant or young girl, and now this very striking young lady--the whole sense of it--"I'm delighted with it"--"how beautiful this all is" and "you're lovely" and so the words convey this. And it's only two stanzas. You don't need a whole book to do this. That's typical of Hawaiians.

They use words in such strange ways. For example, the famous battle of Nuuanu in which Kamehameha conquered Oahu. Presumably, they pushed them over the Pali. Well, of course, a whole horde of the Oahu warriors were running down the Pali to get away from being killed, and in the scrambling down--all of these men running over the edge--someone later

referred to the battle as a group of mullet, as you see a whole school of mullet jumping in the water. So the battle is called Kelele Kaanae, the jumping of the mullets. Now you would never attach mullets to a battle in a valley, but that whole question of seeing so many people going over and envisioning this brought them back to what they usually do. He evidently, or she evidently, loved fishing, and so it looked like a school of mullet jumping. So they can give this kind of allusion. Therefore, to translate place names, to translate names from history is not always easy. You need the story itself; otherwise, it doesn't make sense at all. But Hawaiians like that because you have to be on the "in" or you miss everything, and so if you are alert to what's happening, if you have some inkling of their history, then all of these older songs are a tremendous source of history even though they may not, as I say, refer to a specific incident, there are allusions to the incident.

S: So one has to be truly akamai, right?

K: Yes, it's not easy to deal with it, but it's fascinating and shows the richness of their whole culture.

S: Do you find the Pukui book Place Names of Hawaii...?

K: I suppose I'm one of those who don't particularly care for the book. Yes, her name is on it, but I don't think she did it. I think she kind of helped those who were putting this together.

S: Because she's rather elderly, isn't she?

K: Yes, at the time the book was written she was getting on in years. [Second edition, 1974] But the book needed, I think, far more research than it got, and there are some mistakes in it.

S: As far as just literal translations?

K: Well, for example, Dole Street, if I'm not mistaken, they say refers to Sanford B. Dole. It doesn't; it refers to Dr. Dole who was the first president of Punahou School [Reverend Daniel Dole served from 1841 to 1854] who was a relative of his. But we're talking of a different Dole and so, you know, you can jump to conclusions. Because Sanford B. Dole was the great man at the time of the overthrow of the monarchy and became the first governor of Hawaii, that presumably was the name. But that was not true. There's quite a bit of this kind of thing in it.

And again, the translations--the Hawaiian translations of some of the streets and some of the places--preclude or don't seem to take in the possibility that there was a story connected. They've just taken the word and translated it.

S: Just a literal translation then.

K: Yes, whereas I think that if better research had been done, we could have found out how the name came into existence in the first place and that a lot of these names are references to something. Because of that, Hawaii's history is tremendously beautiful.

S: Would you like to talk a little about--we've skipped around--but what about a few anecdotes about just growing up. I'm just curious as to what you did. You must have had some leisure.

K: My grandmother grew up in a convent school on Fort Street--the old Sacred Hearts Sisters Convent School--therefore was inclined to be very precise. I was not allowed to wear long pants until I got to high school; that can be traumatic for a boy, but anyway I had to wear shorts or the old golf knickers. That kind of boxed me in in some cases.

My grandfather, on the other hand, was very easy going and loved to gather all of his grandchildren together. We all lived out in Kaimuki; all lived in the same big lot--his home, my cousins' home, et cetera. He loved to get the grandchildren together and he would tell us Hawaiian things. Now Hawaiians are great for stories--not always reliable. They can make up stories on their own so you don't know whether to believe this or that and how factual it is. But they are all very interesting, so whatever was happening to us as children as we were growing up, there was always some Hawaiian custom that was added to it. I don't know whether it was just his new custom or whether this was something that went way back.

I remember one of my little cousins lost a tooth and he went through a long process of taking that tooth and going around her leg and chanting in Hawaiian and so forth, and that would make her a tall, beautiful girl and the chant was to ask God to make her a striking person, and she has turned out that way, but I don't know if that's because of this basic tooth chant of his. (laughs) But they could do these kinds of things. And as I say, growing up in that kind of society which has disappeared for all practical purposes--what a pity.

S: It was very loving, very caring.

K: And our relationship to our grandfather--even though he was a very dignified and very careful individual--yet there was this warmth that was always there. He liked to drink and my grandmother didn't appreciate that and my grandmother would hide his bottle from time to time. And every now and then he would say, "Do you know where it is?" and I would

say, "Yes," and tell him where it was, and my grandmother could never figure out how my grandfather was so sharp and knew that it was hidden in the clothes closet or wherever the bottle was hidden.

On the other hand, as a little boy I can remember that he wanted me to massage him by walking up and down his back. That's the old, old style of massage and, as a boy, I thought this was kind of silly. But now I appreciate the fact that I was involved in it and saw how it worked. Just to walk up and down his legs--and he was not a big man--not a heavyset man--he was quite slight--and I had to wear no shoes and no stockings, just bare feet. But that again was a page from the past that has gone, unfortunately.

I had, as I mentioned earlier, these grandaunts, the Prendergast sisters. They were also a source of appreciation because the old-timers had excellent memories and I would say, "Well, what about this and what about that?" and without any hesitation they would give you the whole thing. My grandmother was the same way. I was always amazed that they knew the answers to everything. I thought, "Gosh, I hope when I get older I can do this." But they could; they had good memories. It was from the old-timers, not only in the family but others that I met in the course of my work, that I gravitated to, because you learn so much from these old-timers and their whole sense of what is right and what is not right.

I remember being over in Kona and the two Aiu sisters had this little shop in their home and they sold lauhala things and other little knick knacks that were made. In those days, again the early fifties, the tourist population was not that heavy in Kona. But nevertheless, I was visiting them one day and at noontime we were sitting out on the porch talking and a tourist lady from Iowa or Nebraska or wherever came down the street from the Kona Inn dressed in a bikini, which was never intended for her but was intended, evidently, for her grandchild. But anyway, she was wearing this and came down the street, came into the property--right in front of us--picked quite a few plumerias from the tree--put them in her hair--walked out without a word and walked into the Catholic church next door.

No one of us--there must have been four, five or six of us sitting there--no one said a word. Complete silence. But after a little while, one of the older ladies said, "Mahaoi," which is the Hawaiian word for cheeky, brassy, bold. That's all that was said. Nobody agreed with her; nobody dissented; nothing was said again for several more minutes, which was typically Hawaiian. The one word covered the whole thing, and it was not said to the woman herself, they created no problem, there was no confrontation, they didn't scold her or anything and they didn't go into a long

diatribe among themselves, but everybody understood just the one word. That kind of thing has also disappeared, and it's rarely seen, but once in a while you do see it--where the Hawaiians just have a word or two.

S: And that says it all.

K: That says it all.

The question of the Queen's estate also. Like other members of the royal family, she had her own property, and fortunately for the estate today, much of her property was in Waikiki and, particularly, in Kona--two very valuable areas. So the estate can be quite helpful, as a result of all this. And in compliance with her will that the estate take care of Hawaiian orphans and half-orphans, the estate today is able to deal with children whose parents are divorced, whose parents have died, for one reason or another are going through difficult circumstances.

Now it's difficult for the average Hawaiian without these added problems of orphanage because of the stereotypes; because so many Hawaiians have the impression that "I'll never get anywhere because I'm dumb anyway," and if you get into this kind of framework, you really won't get out of it. So the estate, fortunately, is able to deal with those orphans and half-orphans who also have this other problem, and they can begin to help them overcome them and have a better appreciation of themselves, of their culture and their worth in the community.

S: All right now, when you're speaking "Hawaiian," are we talking say one-quarter, one-eighth? Is there a delineation there?

K: No, that's not important as long as they have some Hawaiian blood. But if they're growing up in a Hawaiian atmosphere, a Hawaiian community. It doesn't have to be just Waianae or any of these places. It may be in the middle of the city, but there are four or five or six Hawaiians living in the same area and, therefore, they all seem to lean on each other and, if we're not careful, they get the wrong impression as to where they are in society. And while this particular estate isn't able to take care of all of that, fortunately, in the social work framework of the total city and state, the Liliuokalani estate can reach into the Hawaiian population and take care of that situation rather than just have them deal with the others.

And particularly with 1986 Hawaii, where you have so many refugees who have come here from other places. They have other problems, so if you put one whole cauldron, you really have a mishmash to work with. So it's kind of fortunate that we have this estate set aside to be able to

deal with it on their own cultural level, so that they have an appreciation of where they are in society. And the stereotypes are varied and are, generally, terribly unfair. The general impression given is that the Hawaiians lead in all that they shouldn't lead in, that the Hawaiians lead in the percentage in the prisons and unwed mothers and all that sort of thing.

I'm not so sure that I agree with that. I have a hard time with it because I'm not sure that if a boy's arrested and is taken to prison, if he is one-fourth Hawaiian, why that one-fourthness gets blamed for his being a problem child in the community. That's a problem for me to face. I have a hard time with that. Secondly, if a Hawaiian gets into a problem, I wonder if many people don't react in a special way, "Well, what did you expect with the way they go nowadays? They're lazy, they're this, that and the next thing." They know that that's the stereotype on them and they tend to accept it, and so how do you build up a sense of respect for their culture--a sense of pride in the past and all that their ancestors have done? If they really had an appreciation of their Hawaiian past, then none of this stereotype would be possible.

S: Well, this is what happens when you tell a child, "You're a bad boy, you're a bad boy." You tell him this long enough and he finally decides he's a bad boy.

K: Yes. So for the Hawaiians I realize that this is a difficult situation, therefore, I enjoy the fact that I am now able, with my long background as a priest, am now able to divert the social service aspect of it and, in my declining years, to spend time doing what I can in this area with my interest in Hawaiiana and with my interest in people. It makes it all very handy for me.

There are a number of aspects of Hawaii's life which are beautiful without going into the distant past. Even if we did go to the distant past and if Hawaiians had some idea of their great-great-grandparents, I don't think they would feel so badly about things Hawaiian. First of all, much of the Hawaiian history has been distorted, been misunderstood, partly because, I guess, we're looking at Hawaiian history with the eyes of a western European and, therefore, we don't really see it on its own level with its own depth.

If we look at the old-timers, like say King Kamehameha the Great, that's taking us back 200 years, but there was so little of the European in him. What little contact he had was very, very limited and, therefore, you find in that kind of a history the older culture of Hawaii. And if you look deeply into it, you find that it was a tremendous culture. His whole way of functioning, his attitudes toward the other islands, his attitudes toward those he defeated, his

attitudes toward the foreigners who were arriving here--there was a completely different attitude than we would have today. We've lost touch with that, unfortunately.

So to say that the arrival of Captain Cook was a disaster for the Hawaiians, I guess, depends on several things. If you want to blame him and his successors for all the diseases, for all the economic problems and so forth, well, it does seem kind of handy. But I think that there was no possibility, anyway, of the Hawaiian culture of Kamehameha's day surviving, no matter who came here.

END OF TAPE 1/SIDE 1

I think the Hawaiians need to have a deeper appreciation of what existed then and what could have survived and, amazingly, what did survive from the old culture. Was the European culture, the American culture, so dominant that we lost everything? My grandfather was born a hundred years after Kamehameha the Great and yet I think he was--he had a deep sense of the culture. Now he wasn't born until the 1860s, but he had a feel for that, which meant that he was living in an American culture at that time, he was living at the time of the overthrow of the monarchy, he was living while the American flag was flying--was able to survive all of this without any bitterness and he could rejoice in what had happened for his people and not be bitter, as you sometimes find it today.

When you find some bitterness among Hawaiians today, I think what you have, generally, is a misunderstanding or a jumping to conclusions or only having only half of the story, and a half a truth is just as bad as no truth at all. So that I would hope that a Hawaiian history with Hawaiian eyes could be written now. Gavin Daws wrote The Shoals of Time which is perhaps the best book of Hawaiian history in the sense of the best collection of facts. I think the book should be rewritten by someone who has a Hawaiian feel for those facts and can see what was happening to the Hawaiians as it was all transpiring around them.

The reaction of Hawaiians to new things was very, very beautiful. The words they concocted when the new things were being added show that there was no harshness. They were able to take what they felt was good from these new things and, frequently, with their very peculiar sense of humor, would produce a whole new word that would give you an entirely different aspect.

To bring it closer to our times, when King Kalakaua made his trip around the world--the first monarch to do that--in Europe there were always the references to the crown. Well, the Hawaiian kings had no crown. So while in Europe, he

designed his own crown. He looked at the crowns they had there. He designed one with taro leaf and all in it, ordered it, and came on home and said, "There's going to be a coronation." Well, the announcement of the coronation was kind of confusing. He had already been king about sixteen years or so and what did this mean? Was he going to be more of a king? What's this all about? Well, it's a coronation.

How do you explain coronation? Well, it's the placing of this thing on his head. Oh, so he needs a new kind of headdress. Poni mo'i--to place this on the king--the mo'i. That's the word that got out. We're going to have this placing of this thing on the king's head. About the same time, a new plant was introduced to Hawaii, a new flower. And typical of the Hawaiians again, "What is it?" Well, it's a carnation. And the confusion between coronation and carnation--to this day the Hawaiian word for carnation is ponimo'i. But you know, it's the typical approach, you accept what's happening, you take it in stride. I think it's beautiful. I don't think it's anything to be ashamed of. The Hawaiians had a nice peculiar sense of humor about the whole thing. There are so many stories like this that illustrate their reaction to what was happening around them.

S: And it illustrates an acceptance, as you say, and a contentment.

K: It's all very nice. If that's what he wants to wear on his head, let him wear it. And then, of course, the flower appears--now what? But that's one of the reasons why I'm fascinated with the Hawaiian language. So if you look at ponimo'i--how can you call a carnation ponimo'i? It doesn't make any sense unless you know the story. There are dozens and dozens of words that I've found in this area. As I say, I think what it's done to me is give me a different sense of everything that's Hawaiian, and so I don't have any anger against the coming of a new culture, the coming of a new flag or anything else. I see it as all very inevitable and I thank God the Hawaiians were able to survive and to survive well under the circumstances.

It is not true that the Hawaiian culture is dead. We're not living the way my grandparents lived or the way my great-grandparents lived, but I don't know whether I would want to live in a grass hut either. We've gone beyond that stage. I enjoy the foods of Hawaii. I wish I understood the fishing the way they understood it--where they knew where the fish holes were, the understanding of different kinds of fish at different times of the year. They had whole proverbs that said when such and such a flower was in blossom, that was the time to catch mullet. So they knew these things and worked away from nature and had a deep respect for nature.

For Christianity to come in and face what, I guess, they thought was heathenism was not quite true. There was a real religious background that permeated all Hawaiian life, but it was their very simplistic understanding and appreciation of the works of God as they saw them. And so God manifests himself through flowers, through volcanoes, through fish, through everything. And so whether God is manifesting himself through a volcano, showing some anger or just wanting to put on a display, you deify that and you deified it in either a male way or a female way, and in this case they picked Pele. Fine. There are certain aspects of Hawaiian life where you picked a male god.

Their whole sense of God acting in nature--whether it was one god as we understand it or whether they saw these as separate gods--is not easy to answer. My answer would be that there was one because there could only be one directing all of this and that he or she or it manifested themselves through these different aspects of nature. So when the sea got rough, he was angry about something. We use the expression, "God is trying to tell you something." Well, for the Hawaiians, God was always trying to tell them something and that was their reaction to nature.

Every part of their culture was built on nature--it was built on a kind of religion. Now for me to say that I'm going to give up my Christianity and go back to the Hawaiian religion doesn't make sense. I can see melding the two, and having an appreciation of both, because I understand the two, and so it doesn't bother me to be a Christian minister. I don't have a need to suppress any aspect of the Hawaiian's goddess Pele or anything else. That's all fine with me.

Now there is a problem of superstition occasionally with things Hawaiian, but that's true of the Irish, that's true of everybody. They're very superstitious, but that's human nature reacting to what we see around us, and so for the Hawaiians to be very superstitious about what happened with the storm in Hilo at the time of the Merrie Monarch Festival, I understand their reaction to this, but I don't blame it on the ancient Hawaiians, and I understand why they say, "Well, God is trying to tell us and we shouldn't have done this." But, that's not limited to Hawaiians.

And, of course, as a priest I guess it's kind of puzzling for people to have me tell them some of the--what they call fairy tales or legends of Hawaii. They say, "Do you really believe that?" I look at them, amazed, "What do you mean, do I believe it? Of course, I believe it." But they're seeing it from a slightly different viewpoint and if I could change their glasses for them, I could let them temporarily see it from nature.

I remember once taking some nuns out some place, and I was explaining all kinds of legends of Hana and everything to them and one of the nuns said to me, "Do you really believe all those things or are they just stories?" I said, "Listen. You know, if you understand how Hawaiians deal with nature--supposing now I told you a story about Hana here--that this matriarch was very adamant that her husband had to take care of the taro patch or whatever it was to be done, 'and now and don't postpone it--don't go fishing or anything else--we've got to get this done.' Well, she goes off to visit somebody and he decides that this is a good day to go fishing or pick up limu or whatever. So he gets his two little grandchildren and he says, 'Come. We'll go for a little while anyway.' Well, unfortunately for him, she returns earlier than expected and, as she comes over the hill, she sees him with the two little ones along the shore picking up seaweed or whatever, and she curses them and turns them into stone."

I said to the nuns, "Do you see those three stones there in the water? There's the grandfather--the big one--and the two little ones are the two little boys I was telling you about." And immediately the nuns said to me, "Is that a true story?" and I said, "No, I just made it up right now, but that's how Hawaiians can do this, and that's how you have so many legends."

So when they read me some old Hawaiian legend and say, "What do you think of this?" Well, first of all, I'd like to know when it came--who composed it--is it very old or is it not? It's probably my cousin who composed it. Because Hawaiians are storytellers and because they live so close to nature, these kinds of things are possible, but they can be misunderstood by people who don't normally live here or haven't had a chance to appreciate all this.

But Hawaii can be a very beautiful place not only because of its physical beauty, but because the old culture is still here--it still permeates society--it still has some effect and even the tourist in Waikiki who sees a lovely hula dancer in the process--it's not what the Hollywood hula hula was all about--but they see a Hawaiian girl who has learned to interpret, who has learned to tell a story by the motions of her hands, the wink of her eye or whatever. She can describe the wind going through the hills, the trees. She can describe all kinds of things and do it very gracefully, and you look at it and you can appreciate it.

And the more you know of the language, the more you know of the story of the song, the more beautiful it is. And unfortunately, the tourists aren't getting this. Well, it's not that easy either. You do need some preparatory work, you do need some preparation to understand all of this, but whenever it is possible, it's very interesting for them.

S: In talking recently to a woman who's been around here for some fifty years, she said that at one point some Hawaiians were actually ashamed of their Hawaiian blood, but that the cultural renaissance that we've seen in the past twenty years or so has helped them regain some dignity or self-esteem or whatever term you choose.

K: There've been periods during which the Hawaiians have been criticized--part of it is their fault and part of it is not. When a Hawaiian is sent to school in order to be locked up in one room behind one little desk for several hours a day, it is not the Hawaiians' idea of enjoying life. And it's such a nuisance. I could go with my grandfather and go swimming. So his reaction to studies--it's an oppressive, constraining situation. And what good is it? Because my grandfather's doing so fine and he didn't have all that. So I guess there was a tug of war that was constantly going on for so many people, and that's down even to our day where there's a struggle.

On the other hand, those who were fortunate enough to get a good education, who realized what it meant to them and to their families--they don't regret it and they've made good use of it. We've had Hawaiians in every area of society and in every profession who have done very, very well. And they're not a handful--they're in good numbers all over the state. But unfortunately, the focus of attention, the spotlight, is primarily on those who don't make the grade or those who create problems or those who make the headlines because of some silly thing that they did. But that's true, I think, with any culture going through a phase.

The educational process in Hawaii has been a long process. What were they educating the early Hawaiians for when they first had classrooms? Was it to make farmers? Was it to make ukulele players or what were we really looking for? It's amazing that we did get so many doctors, lawyers and so forth out of that peculiar society. I think that we can be very proud of what has been accomplished, in spite of the mistakes that have been made; in spite of mistakes on the part of the government; in spite of mistakes in the school department; in spite of mistakes made by part of the clergy and others. Nevertheless, good will out and that there are...today I think we can point to lots of Hawaiians, others in the community, who have been very, very successful because they applied themselves not identically or in the same area, but they applied themselves and made something of themselves.

Hawaiians have a feel for people, but do not easily have a feel for things. Hawaiians like working with people, but are not particularly that good with things unless it happens to be in their own creative mold. The Hawaiian can be an excellent musician, can be an excellent artist and so forth.

But these are talents and if they have had a chance to develop, they develop beautifully. Maybe some of those who never got a chance to develop--it's too bad that they were lost in the shuffle--but many did develop and they became excellent in their fields. It's amazing to me how many went into military service and moved up the ranks and did exceedingly well for themselves.

On the other hand, the early Hawaiian boys, particularly young men, loved the ocean. Canoes were fine, but these big boats that were coming here were obviously a fascinating thing for them. Hence, so many of them stowed away deliberately. They couldn't get permission to go on these things, so they'd stow away and when they were way out at sea, they'd surface and would volunteer to do anything to stay on board. They loved to ride these ships. Consequently, many of them did get on the ships and stayed. You have large contingents of Hawaiians in western Canada and the northwest United States who went up in the early days and never came back. Those who did come back, came back with their eyes opened to some new things.

For example, it is really very odd that you cannot have a Hawaiian luau without lomilomi salmon. Odd because there's no salmon in Hawaii. All of our salmon has to come from the Northwest--from Alaska. Now the reason is that salmon is a cold water fish that you'll never find in tropical waters. In the very early days when the Hawaiian boys on these ships first tasted salmon in Alaska, they liked it and how do you bring that back here when you're not coming back here for three, four or five months because they were out getting seals and what not--the furs. They would salt them very, very heavily in wooden kegs and would bring them back that way. There was no refrigeration. So when they came home and opened up the keg, the poor salmon filets were hard as rocks with the salt. So they would take it and go under the waterfall and let the waterfall wash off all the salt. At the same time you would massage it. Hence, that lomilomi salmon now becomes a delicacy, because when the families got to eat it, their luaus were the prestige luaus because they had this lomilomi salmon.

Today when you get lomilomi salmon, they don't lomi it at all--they just cut it up in chunks. But the old massaging of the salmon was necessary because of the heavy salting. Consequently, the whole question of introducing a new fish to Hawaii became very important to Hawaiian life--everybody wanted to try to get this. Now there's no word for salmon in Hawaii because we didn't have any. They were told it was salmon. Well, every Hawaiian word must end with a vowel because of the music of the language, so salmon comes out to samono, but there's no "s" in the language so it comes out to kamano and that's still the word for salmon.

Now in the course of time, some enterprising Hawaiian translated the word kamano back into English and gets a different word for it now. Because if you're just taking kamano, which is the word we use for salmon--but that doesn't mean salmon--what does kamano mean? Well, among various translations you can get out of mano is plentiful, lots, prosperity. Hence, in some of the very old Hawaiian families to this day on New Year's at midnight you eat a piece of salmon because it's a symbol of prosperity--ka mano. It's their reaction again to things foreign which they've made a part of their culture and done it very beautifully.

Now, as I say, there is so much of this and that, if the modern Hawaiians really understood, had a feel for this--instead of being worried about the overthrow of the Queen, instead of fighting wars that have long gone past--and would try to appreciate and understand the culture and translate that from the past into the present, and let the present day Hawaii be influenced by this Hawaiian attitude, Hawaiian perception, Hawaiian sense of where things are and what they are.

S: How do you feel about--say the family Sunday at Bishop Museum? Do you think the programs there help educate the general population?

K: Well, first of all, I can't say too much because I haven't been to one of those. Yes, certainly it does no harm, but I don't think we learn an awful lot. When I was a little boy, we never had haku leis--they had kind of gone out of existence. Nowadays there's a tremendous interest in haku leis--that style of lei making.

S: Oh yes, that's the nicest thing you can do--to give somebody a haku lei.

K: Yes, but that's all very, very new to me. When I was a boy, that was not the lei. Now in 1927 [1928], I think it was, when they had the first lei day, the closest we had in those times to haku as we know it today was the kind of lei that was woven around a man's hat. He had a hat band of flowers--that perhaps would be close. The haku style came back later and I think it came back through a different avenue and that was through the hula. The more the hula groups started to study and research the background of the hula dancing and so forth and so on, the more some of this came out and I have no problem with it, but as I say, as a little boy I'd never seen a haku lei--wouldn't have known what it was all about.

Now things tend to disappear but they tend to come back again and I have no problem with that. The playing of some of the Hawaiian games, ulumaika and so forth, it's nice, but it will never take in our time anyway, because there's not

enough competitiveness to it. We have croquet, we have a few other things people play, but it doesn't require enough to make it very interesting.

Yes, I think that there are great efforts to restore some of these cultural facets of the past--there's no harm in it. My hesitation with some of it is that we tend to look upon it as if this is it, you know, we've resurrected something. Well, that's fine, but I think what they need is a better appreciation as to what underlies it. Why were the haku leis done that way would be far more interesting to me than people learning how--as to why those flowers were used, why they were stitched in the way they were, why you braided them that way. There were different reasons for that and it wasn't just an accidental thing.

Hawaiians had a peculiar sense against violence. For example, you never cut anything; you never broke anything; you had to kind of do it very gently because any form of violence irritated Hawaiians. And so today the maile lei, which everybody loves--all very nice, but there's very little maile left in Hawaii because they went up into the hills and just tore them off the vines and, consequently, didn't leave enough to grow back. Most of your maile today is being brought in from the Cook Islands because, unfortunately, people didn't have an appreciation and an understanding of the ecological system that the Hawaiians used in their day.

But I have no problem with Kamehameha School and Bishop Museum and all these trying to bring back an understanding and appreciation, but I hope it goes a step further than that--that they get the real feel of what this is all about--don't get lost.

S: Not just surface.

K: Lei day today, the leis are being put together so differently. I have no problem with that--it's creativity. If the missionaries, the haoles, had never come, the Hawaiians probably would still have found new ways to use their flowers. But I think that in the process we need to see how they did it in the old days and why they did it. First of all, they were limited in the resources that they had. The elderly Hawaiians didn't have the nice long needles that they have today and, consequently, haku was far more important in the ancient days because once you got the needle you didn't need this because you could sew the flower without all the tying.

Now there are many aspects of that--there are many aspects of the music of Hawaii that need to be looked into a little more closely as to what do the Hawaiians really mean by these words when they use them in songs? Why was it, for example, at a certain period in Hawaiian history that every

Hawaiian song had to have one English word? And you hear the songs every now and then--just one English word pops up. Another thing is the imitation. In the song itself they can imitate almost anything they want--imitate the horse hooves, imitate a train ride, you can hear the train in the background--and it all becomes part of the music. That sense of the Hawaiians using nature and understanding what is happening around them is beautiful. More of that should be done--a better understanding--how the Hawaiians could adapt their music, the cowboy music and so forth. It's a rich field that's not been fully touched.

S: Correct me if I'm wrong, but I think somebody who has really made an effort to go beyond the surface is Palani Vaughn with the work that he's done with the music.

K: Yes, he has focused his attention on King Kalakaua. Now that's a special period all by itself. He has become an expert in that area.

S: Yes, but from my viewpoint I think he's done an outstanding job of researching and, as you say, going deeper.

K: Maiki Aiu [Mrs. Kahauanu Lake] did a lot of research for hula that moved it to where they are today. You know, when you look back, it's only a hundred years ago--less than that--when there was a thousand dollar fine for dancing the hula, so we've come a long way with all of this. And I can't exactly fault all these people. Outsiders didn't understand Hawaiians, and Hawaiians, I guess, were not always fair. When Hawaiians were dancing the hula, I think that sometimes they would deliberately irritate some of the old missionaries, knowing that it would upset them. Hawaiians could be mischievous. On the other hand, Hawaiians were sometimes frustrated by what the missionaries were trying to do to them, so they would deliberately tease.

You have that kind of human give and take that was going on constantly, but that's true of the American Indians, that's true of South America and all these other places. We have to see human society working as human society. As I say, there are lots of people who are doing very, very fine research work. It's a vast field. It has many avenues open to Hawaiians. I would hope that more and more Hawaiians and non-Hawaiians would get interested in all these fields. There's much that can be done. The feather leis have begun to fall out of favor. When I was a boy, that was the great thing--every man had a feather lei on his hat. Today we don't wear hats--we don't have the feather leis, so they've disappeared. There are lots of these things that need to be brought back, to be understood and appreciated. Now when I was a little boy, the favorite lei in those days was the paper lei.

S: Paper?

K: Yes, made out of tissue paper and they were beautiful things, just beautiful. But they've gone out of existence, too. We've gone through all kinds of phases. And then, of course, came Hollywood's efforts to change the hula skirt. We don't have the pili grass anyway and we use ti leaves; why not?

END OF TAPE 1/SIDE 2

May 5, 1986

S: We were discussing the importance of the knowledge of the language with respect to the culture.

K: Yes, with Hawaiians, communication was limited to vocal language in the sense that there was no other writing method. Even the art work was fairly limited, and so their main method of communication was by language. Secondly, you have the other aspect that history could not be preserved unless it was preserved by language--by the spoken language--because again they didn't have a written language. And, therefore, much care and art went into the whole question of chants, some of it very interesting because, for example, they had a mnemonic system of remembering one line to the other, all the way down on these long histories, very similar to the old Jewish hymns and, particularly, the psalms, in which the ending of one line leads into the beginning of the next and so forth. And so once you understand it, you can easily remember the sequence--you don't break in that easily.

As a result, I think the Hawaiians of the early days--pre-Captain Cook days--had a much finer appreciation of how to communicate without lots of repetition, without saying it the same way, without having a "he said" and "she said." They can produce so much of their history through a very unique system of poetry for all practical purposes. And therefore, the language, as it developed and as it was used, became the vehicle for so much of the total culture that you had peculiar kinds of expressions, a whole series of methods of speaking, if you were a fisherman, for example.

Whether we say it was superstition or not, for example, a fisherman never said he was going fishing because presumably that would be bad luck. I'm not so sure that we should limit it to saying that it would be bad luck, although that has been the general consensus. I think that what they didn't want to do is they didn't want anyone--any other fisherman in the area--to get word that they were going fishing for several reasons. One was that the Hawaiians had a very keen sense of where the fishing holes were--where the fish, in a sense, nested, where they gathered. And so if

they wanted to get a certain kind of fish, they knew the exact spot on the reef to go to. And I wonder if sometimes their language was such that they didn't want anyone coming around watching them go to the spot.

You have that same system in the old Jewish history where they didn't have any treasury. How could you keep your family wealth? You could be robbed anytime. And so what did you do about your wealth? You buried it. It was buried by one individual and he was the only one who knew where it was buried. Generally, it was the father of the family, the patriarch. And what he would do--it would be ten paces from this tree or ten paces from that and he knew where it was buried. Nobody else did. Now that meant that whenever they needed resources, he could get it for them out of this treasury, but nobody else could. Therefore, if someone tried to rob them, he was the only one they could do it to. Secondly, and particularly with the kind of culture they lived in, with all the surrounding countries that would raid them from time to time, there was no way that they could get the family treasury. So even if they overtook the land and scared everybody off, later on the man could come back and find it again. So consequently, in the biblical stories, the story of the man finding this area of land and wanting to buy it because he had discovered on the land this treasury. He then covers it up and goes to buy the land because once he becomes the owner, he is the owner of the treasury, too. And that's in one of the stories in Christ's life.

So with the Hawaiians, it was somewhat the same way, I think. With the fishing holes, with their understanding of everything, they could use this poetic language that they would want to check on such and such a plant or whatever it was, and that was an indication to whoever they were talking to as to what they were going to do, but you had to be in on the inside language, otherwise you didn't know what this was about. And that was true in so many areas.

The Hawaiian culture really is an impressive culture--that it was possible for this to develop and become so refined by the time Captain Cook arrived. And then to have it so quickly disappear after that for various reasons--partly their own fault--they became enamored with all that they saw, which was understandable, and partly because so many of those who came pooh-poohed what looked like silly practices and so forth and, therefore, the Hawaiians retreated and didn't continue to use the customs that were really part and parcel of their culture.

And so with the language, with an understanding of the key words and what they meant. For example, one of the words that's used very frequently today is kupuna for an old-timer, for the older person of the family. I'm convinced that the word kupuna has a far deeper and more significant meaning

than merely "the old-timer." Puna is a spring, a source, and ku is to stand. This is the one who stands tall in our family with all the resources--he understands all the history and so forth. He or she is the kupuna. So I think that we use words now, but we don't always see the real significance behind the roots of the words. And that's true of other languages, but in Hawaiian you see it quite distinctly from time to time.

S: You had mentioned Nona Beamer. You were going to say something about her.

K: There was an interesting article in this week's MidWeek issue [May 7, 1986] about her and her efforts to preserve the culture. And again, you see the confusion. She was raised by her grandmother for a short period of time and, apparently through the grandmother, picked up a deep respect for the old culture. And then went to school and all of this was pooh-poohed. It was wrong to dance the hula, it was wrong to talk Hawaiian, and so you could see the confusion even in a person who's only today in her sixties. Much more so it would have been true with regard to her parents and her grandparents, but you see that even to some extent today--the confusion--the contradictions that seem to arise when you have two cultures suddenly confront each other. I'm sure that we're not finished with that process yet. I'm sure that the confrontations are still there and still quite serious in many cases.

For example, working here with the Liliuokalani Trust. If we're working with little children who are Hawaiian and have grown up to some extent with a Hawaiian background and then to have their parents suddenly divorced or broken because of death, and then either there is another parent coming in or there is no parent, the child grows up with some confusion, some hesitation about whether what they thought was true in the earlier years, they now think is not true. I'm sure that the social workers here in dealing with these little children can begin to ferret out some of this confusion whereby the child really doesn't understand, and even though they may be very talented little children, when they go to school, the whole school system is different for them. That regimentation, that whole question of authority and so forth may be a rather unsettling experience for them.

Consequently, how puzzled are they one month later, one year later, and is there any way that we can unravel this for them before it becomes deeply implanted in their system? So I see tremendous possibilities that the social workers have in dealing with children like this, so that we should have less and less Hawaiians who are resentful of outside cultures and less and less Hawaiians who are ashamed of their own culture. If we can somehow in their early years begin to

unravel what seem like contradictions, what seem like problems for them.

The general stereotype of the Hawaiian being more an entertainer rather than a successful person in the community, I think, is continuing only because we haven't done something for the little ones to help them cope with this as they continue to go into high school and into the community. To have a Hawaiian boy graduate from school here, not as any great light, but do well in school, go on to college, work on the mainland in various kinds of cities, various kinds of communities, then return to Hawaii ten or fifteen years later, his whole vision has broadened tremendously for him and his effect on his relatives, his effect on the community, I think, is a great asset.

And so while at the moment, you hear much about the brain drain of young people people all going to the mainland for jobs and everything else, I'm not so sure that this is such a terrible thing. If they never come back, there's been a loss, no doubt. But, you know, we have benefitted from people coming to us with their experiences and, it's been to our advantage. Now if we can share by going to where they came from and sharing some of our attitudes, some of our heritage, why not? I'm not so sure that every Hawaiian must return to Hawaii and must be successful in Hawaii. We're part of a large nation and we should feel ourselves as part of it and not as an isolated group by ourselves out here, and if you happen to come into our pervue, fine and if you don't, that's too bad.

I can see many reasons for Chicago enjoying the benefits of a fine Hawaiian professional whether he happens to be a dentist or whatever he happens to be, but that he does much for the community not necessarily as far as the HVB is concerned, but as far as sharing attitudes, sharing the depths that he learned as a young one growing up here in Hawaii. And even his appreciation of nature, even his or her appreciation of the mixture of races and so forth and so on. That tremendous wealth carried back to Baltimore, Maryland, to Des Moines, Iowa, can be a great asset to communities there.

S: Well, even the mobility on the mainland these days is interesting. It's interesting to see the effect that someone from the South will have on someone in another area. It's all the United States and a lot of them are haoles, but each area is different and it's fun to share.

K: Well, the whole New England area is unique. I have classmates that I've visited in Maine and in Boston. Their whole perception is almost as isolated as it is for Hawaiians to be way out in the Pacific. But that sharing that's going on constantly today, I think, is healthy.

I had a cousin visit me here last week. He's about twenty-six, born and raised in upper New York and has lived there all his life. He came here for a visit and was amazed at what he saw, amazed at everything, because his perception of Hawaii, in spite of the fact that both of his parents came from Hawaii and grew up here, it's a storybook thing for them, but to see it in actual contact. His tasting Hawaiian food was interesting. His perception of Iolani Palace as we passed by and the more I explained the palace and the monarchy in the early days. This was so far removed it was almost like an Elizabethan fairytale, but to see that it existed here less than a hundred years ago for him was all very, very...

But again this movement that's taking place not only in our country, but particularly in our country, where we in Hawaii have benefitted for the past 200 years from having people come here and do things for us--now we are able to go to the mainland and contribute, and I see no great problem with this. Obviously, for many who have a reason to remain here--it's more economical or because they just love it and they would prefer this to anything else--that's fine--and while they're here I would hope that they share the wealth that's really theirs--many of them totally unaware that they are that wealthy with experiences of their heritage.

Once they begin to see...I talked to a group yesterday and I said, "You're only six years old as a club and yet your interest in things Hawaiian is still highly superficial. Now you've got to go steps beyond that and begin to look at your real roots and what this is all about." I asked them, for example, "You live here in Pauoa Valley. What does Pauoa mean? What is the history of Pauoa? If you really understood what happened in this valley a hundred or two hundred years ago, maybe you'd have a greater respect for the valley. You'd understand it more." I see this with people living in different sections.

I talked recently to a man living in Nuuanu and I said, "You have this auwai going right past your house. Do you understand what the auwais are all about--these little streams? Do you understand what the rules were and the use of the water from the auwais? You couldn't just divert it for your own purposes entirely, and if it came down to push and shove, there were ratios determined by law, by custom, as to how much you could get. And we rarely ever got to that, but if it came to a decision, it was very easily determined--you've taken too much. You're not allowed to do that.

And it's this kind of respect for the area and how they were able to survive in the area, so that the area was not completely denuded and was able to cater to generation after generation after generation without really being spoiled.

And the whole ecological understanding that the Hawaiians had ought to be really understood by young Hawaiians today.

S: Well, they obviously achieved a balance.

K: Yes, and their whole system--the kapu system--that at certain times of the year you couldn't do it, other times you could. Why those times? And when you look at it very carefully, these are the ideal times. Certain foods were presumably kapu--reserved only for for the royalty. Why? Was there any special reason? Was it that only the good foods were reserved, or was it that a balanced diet was reserved or was there a significance in a word--the name of the fish and what relationship that would have to the average person?

I was explaining to somebody that in Waikiki where Queen Liliuokalani had a home, we now have Ohua Street running down which was part of her property. I said, "I think the original word was ohualani." Ohua is an unusual word. It refers to everyone on her property except her. So that when she spoke of the ohua, it omitted her. Everybody was involved whether you were a relative, whether you were hanaied--brought in by her and she took care of you--whether you worked for her. Everybody was part of the ohua. Now this is not the same as ohana. Ohana would be the family. Sometimes they might be coterminous. Ohua meant those who were there and it meant more than just residents, and if I'm not mistaken, earlier it was ohualani--the Queen's ohua--those who were connected with that property.

And so they had these precise words that were not meant to be exclusive--delineating those who were excluded, but in the sense of a warmth--these were part of the group. So you could have words for different groups that had some special meaning. If you became part of the ohua, even though you're not related to her, it added a kind of prestige to your life and you felt good about it and so forth. And there was so much of this involved in their life. As I say, unfortunately, these words by overuse or by careless use have lost their best meaning.

You mentioned the story about Dr. Elbert. In the course of time he became enamored and fascinated with the Hawaiian language because of his education, his skill, and he was working always jointly with Mrs. Kawena Pukui who had a classical Hawaiian feeling for what the words meant, and so it was a peculiar marriage of two individuals with different backgrounds working on the same word in a sense. And it was a very handy union of the two. And their dictionary, obviously, is the only dictionary of any real worth now because of this uniqueness--his obviously educated process of understanding the significance of words and joining of words together and the overlapping of meanings and so forth--that

educated approach to language added to the very easygoing, but very astute Hawaiian who had a feel for words, and also had a delightful memory that could say, "That's not really what it means," and would go back to some incident and say, "I remember when it was used in a phrase," and that's how you get your best meaning.

And some of the words I enjoy most I remember hearing as a little boy--didn't fully appreciate it--but later on when I heard it being used again, I saw the difference between the way my grandmother used it and the way it's being used today and the word has a slightly different meaning because of the context in which she used it and the context in which they're using it today. But this is part of human history.

S: But in the case of those two they obviously complimented each other beautifully and it was fortunate that they got together and did that.

K: And fortunate that they've lived such long lives.

S: Well, they're bringing out a new edition and they've added 3,000 words.

I was also wondering would you like to get back to any of your own stories? I read when you left Alaska and came back here (and prior to this position), weren't you at First Hawaiian Bank?

K: When I first came back, there was the question of how does a priest without a retirement system survive? Normally I would not have retired, but because of my concern for the expenses that can incur particularly as you get older, I didn't want the church--particularly the church in Alaska--to be saddled with me. Therefore, when I was returning and was offered this peculiar position at the bank, I took it because it was more a public relations position in which I had no banking duties. My job description was "be active in the community the way you used to be." Before I went to Alaska I had served on many boards and commissions and so forth and that was it. Now, because I had been taken into the bank, while I was being active whether it was on the Red Cross board or whether it was the cancer research or whatever, I was always being referred to as from the First Hawaiian Bank, so they got a lot of mileage out of that and presumably I was paid for this. And then, of course, when the position at Liliuokalani Trust opened up and I was appointed by the court, the bank job was no longer necessary and, secondly, there was a conflict of interest because the bank is one of the three trustees. So I immediately resigned from the bank to take this job. And the bank experience again had nothing to do with banking. I don't know anything about banking, but it was a question of being active in the community, assisting whatever. Within a short time I was on a half dozen boards.

S: Do you find that there's a greater sense of community responsibility or social responsibility on the part of our corporations and businesses here than other areas? Do you think that's because of the size?

K: No, I think it's tradition. First of all, the bigger companies here have always been community minded--perhaps not to the same degree or in the same way as today, but I guess there's a kind of paternalistic setup that existed automatically and by necessity. As the sugar planters continued to grow, they obviously needed the cooperation of the community, because a number of sacrifices had to be made on the part of everyone so that the sugar industry could succeed. As a result, the sugar industry reached out to the community in many ways. Now, they had to do it anyway for their plantation communities. You needed to supply the plantation towns with some form of recreation, some form of amusement. Otherwise you would have, or could easily have, disgruntled workers. And so the plantations, on their own, had very elaborate systems of taking care of their people.

S: But from your first experience that you mentioned when you were over on the plantation on Maui, I gathered you weren't the least bit impressed with their health facilities and so forth.

K: It wasn't so much that I was not impressed; they were bad, but, you know, we had not yet graduated to all the finesse that we have today. The open sewage system, and I use the word rather loosely, in which all the dishwater and so forth washed out into the drains, that was an easily adapted system. You realize that while the plantation communities were sitting out in the middle of the cane fields, they couldn't have an elaborate piping system. So they had rather primitive setups.

Now in the 1940s and 1950s that all changed partly because of the pressure from the labor unions, partly because we were becoming more and more enlightened as to how to do it. But I wasn't referring to that so much in a degrading way. It was the system and they were obviously going to have to overcome it in the course of time. But I was thinking of providing the workers with facilities. Now the sports system, the intramural system in the plantations, all existed and that created kind of a paternalism on the part of the corporations. Now if you did it for the plantation communities, what did you do for the head office? What did you do for those who assisted the company in Honolulu? There was some reaching out. Now all of the older corporations have since gone into foundations and have been very generous to the community. So there has always been this kind of thing in Hawaii.

What I think is happening now is that other corporations have entered since World War II, since the Korean war, from the mainland and elsewhere who are not quite geared to this and, therefore, didn't participate in the same way, didn't have the same situation and as a result, I guess, there was a tendency to look askance at any form of paternalism. And certainly in these days of labor unions, there was to be no more paternalism. Consequently, I think we kind of withdrew from it and what you find in the big corporations today is a method to get back into the community without appearing to be paternalistic. And, therefore, you have a much broader donation to the community than you had formerly. And so a big concern, say like Alexander & Baldwin, can make an \$800,000 contribution to the Bishop Museum or something else and feel that making this contribution is more than just to their own employees or to those connected to them in any way, but is to the community in general. And they see this as not only a nice thing to do but something they ought to do. The community becomes a healthier, more thriving community because of Bishop Museum, or because of all kinds of things happening in the community, whether it's in the educational field or anything else.

And so, Hawaii's history is unique I suppose in some of these areas, but I'm sure if we went down to Texas and looked at their history we'd see that kind of development occurring in somewhat the same fashion. It's human nature. Now Hawaii has benefitted not only from the big businesses that have been here for over a hundred years and the new ones that have come in, but then the tremendous implant of the military has obviously had a great impact. At times there were bad feelings between the citizens and the military; at other times it was very fine. So looking at that kind of picture--Hawaii with its natural friendliness and warmth--rivalries and so forth don't make sense. They'll be overcome in a fairly short time.

I think this is true even with racial problems. We have had, and we still have to some degree, some racial tensions. It's inevitable because you're dealing with human people. They're not serious; they're not unsolvable with our present system; but they have to be taken seriously and worked on. We have a peculiar problem at the moment in the community whereby some of the nightclubs supposedly are discriminating toward black servicemen. I'm sure that there is considerable truth to this, but I'm sure that there are other problems connected with this, that it's not quite as simple as that, that you have some people who perhaps are not at ease with blacks. They've never grown up with them, they don't understand them and so forth. Consequently, there may be the arching of eyebrows; there may be the hesitancy of some.

I don't think it was intended, I don't think they ever wanted to be that serious about being discriminatory. But I wonder if there's been a high sensitivity on the part of the blacks because of this and over-reacting to this kind of thing. Plus the fact that I'm sure that blacks, like some Hawaiians, like some Portuguese, like some Japanese, you always have somebody who has a chip on their shoulder and creates a problem for the rest of us. And so maybe they did have a bad experience with one black person. Maybe they're nervous about it.

But those things get ironed out in the course of time. I'm not so sure that we have to solve them with a strong law or a tremendous decree or fiat from somebody in a high place. It'll be solved; it needs to be solved, but it needs to be solved in a very human way and Hawaii will solve it. We're a growing community. Hawaii has grown rapidly, perhaps too rapidly, and consequently you have a lot of these problems that are inevitable because of that rapid growth. We had an awful lot of people coming in quickly being very demanding. We used to speak in the old days of the "Ugly American." Well, if we're going to have five million visitors in Hawaii in one year, all you need is a handful of ugly Americans and you have a problem. That kind of thing is always possible. There's always the need to work these out with people, whether it's the religious element, whether it's the school element. People have to all enter a due process of mending fences, soothing ruffled feathers.

S: It takes a good deal of effort on the part of the people who live here to cope with these various impacts--the impact from the military plus the influx of tourists, which is growing by leaps and bounds. Aside from the military and the tourism, do you see any other alternatives for us to get more jobs? The economy is based to such a large degree on those two.

K: I don't think it will ever change. First of all, the land is limited in Hawaii as far as agriculture goes. Secondly, even for any form of industry, we don't have those kinds of resources here. And, consequently, what you'd have here could probably be done much cheaper elsewhere rather than try to do it here. I don't see tourism as a terrible curse to Hawaiian culture.

If somebody who's a schoolteacher in Iowa wants to come to Hawaii to find out about Hawaii and go back to Iowa and becomes a good schoolteacher who understands a segment of America that has a unique culture, why not? And while that schoolteacher is here, perhaps that schoolteacher doesn't appreciate that the young boy who's the busboy in the restaurant has problems with school or whatever else, and perhaps the schoolteacher is too demanding or has too many

questions. Whatever it may be, you can have the question of individuals who get upset very easily.

I wonder if given more time and more effort on the part of a large group like the Hawaii Visitors Bureau in their efforts to not only school the bus drivers on Hawaiian history--not to be giving out all these myths--so their efforts to school that group alone would make a big difference, because all these tourists come in contact with bus drivers whether it's the ordinary bus in the city or the tour bus. And that's only one group. If they move into the area of all those who are cocktail waitresses, all those who work in various areas of hotel work, so that they appreciate and understand that all these visitors pouring in day after day after day really are curious about us and that includes those very workers. Why not share with them? I think Hawaii needs to gear to that.

Now I see the statistics that those who do service work in the tourist industry are perhaps the lowest paid. Well, that used to be true of those who worked on the plantations and that's been corrected, so why can't this be corrected? There must be some way of upgrading the salary of these people. Now what I find strange is that you can have a man who works for the city on a garbage truck who is making more than a professional nurse per hour. What is this really saying to us? Are we saying that the garbage man's job is far more important to us than nursing, or are we saying that he has a better union than the nurses do? Are we saying that somehow we have never appreciated the nurses?

These are the things that I think need to be ironed out when you're in a society like Hawaii's where we're always going to have a service industry. There are millions of people who want to see and enjoy Hawaii and why not? And in the process, those of us who make it available to them have to understand that this is our way of living, too. Now if we are not being paid adequately, I think something should be done about it and I would wonder why more of this is not being done. When I say I wonder, I'm sure that somebody must be working on it somewhere.

S: Well, there are such terrible inequities in salaries along with the fact that so many people are in jobs that they're over-qualified for. Along the same lines, I read an article that said that secretaries here are among the lowest paid in the United States and the attitude is that "If you don't want this job for a thousand dollars a month, there are plenty of others who do."

K: Well, part of the problem is that those who are in the jobs--if they're satisfied with that, that's an amazing situation. If they are not satisfied with that, what do they do about it? It's not going to come from some do-gooder.

They're going to have to do something about it themselves. So I don't get overly excited about that because I'm sure that somewhere along the line somebody's going to say, "This is ridiculous. We're going to have to do something about this. Let's go." And things will be done. It has to come more from within than without. And I would hope that the government doesn't have to go around interfering with all of this, because that doesn't solve the problem either.

Now government workers have a system and our sugar people are the highest paid agricultural workers in the country. Well, they got it, so why can't the average person? Now one of the difficulties with Hawaii is that you have so many refugees coming in and they're willing to take any job because they can live under it at the moment. So as long as you have that situation you have another problem, but again that's not always going to be true. We're going to come to the end of that line and the number of refugees will not be so great and those in the positions now will say, "We're being underpaid and what are we going to do about it?"

I don't see the economy of Hawaii changing in the sense of moving away from the tourist industry and the service industry to anything else, because, as I say, land is highly limited here and even if we could raise everything here, it would only be for our own local consumption because to ship it elsewhere is so expensive. I see with the shipping of bananas and papayas and everything else you have all these problems with the fruit fly and all kinds of other things. You know, if we had a million dollar industry, it could all be over in one night because we got some kind of peculiar fruit fly from someplace. I can see why California is exceedingly strict as to what goes in and out of California. Well, Hawaii is so far away there is no way we could survive if something like that suddenly collapsed. I don't know whether the macadamia nut industry is going to be that significant. It will obviously have some impact but you know Hawaii's not the only place that grows macadamia nuts, so we're not going to be the capital forever even if we would like to be. And that's true of other things, too.

S: Well, your pineapple, your bananas, your sugar, they can all be grown other places and, as they say, so much cheaper in other places.

K: I would hate to see the tourist industry maligned in any way. It has problems; it has serious problems, but none of them are beyond redemption. They can be studied with a real sense of charity toward everybody involved. There was a complaint the other day that the number of tourists had gone beyond a half a million for the month of March and yet somehow the hotels were not that full. I think that what it's telling us is that the hotel industry itself has failed and the condominiums and some of these other apartments have

taken over, whereby you can have somebody stay at a condominium and come and go as if in a hotel, but the hotels are getting only eighty or eight-five percent volume.

What the hotel industry has to do is look very carefully at what happened and how to readjust this. Were we relying too heavily on the big tour groups coming in, and if you are relying on the tour groups whereby the money is paid and made elsewhere, and Hawaii gets only a fraction, or do you in the meantime shift to the carriage trade? Now one of the statistics given recently by the the HVB is that the average Japanese tourist coming here spends \$230 a day whereas the average American tourist--Canada and the United States--spends \$90 a day. This makes a difference to the hotels, to the restaurants, to all kinds of people. So the hotels, the restaurants, the whole tourist industry has to look very carefully at what's happening.

The Kohala coast is growing up now with all these big hotels going up now. All very expensive. Nothing cheaper than \$150 a night in any of those. And they're full. Now those people who come here with that kind of money--and there's an awful lot of wealth in the United States today--those people are coming here for that kind of experience over in an isolated area--play golf, entertain one another, come in fairly large groups and enjoy the scenery, the climate and then go back to New England or Michigan or wherever. But they're coming, and so the whole tourist industry is not quite that neat in which you just look at the Princess Kaiulani Hotel and see how many are living in it at the moment and how many are not. Because, while that's a nice hotel, there are others that are fancier, and there are others that are not, and they're in between perhaps. And I think that our viewpoint as local people...

END OF TAPE 2/SIDE 1

K: ...if we have all of this here in Hawaii to enjoy, why not share it with others and, in the process of sharing, why not participate and be part of the whole tourist industry? Whether the man who runs a gas station, for example, understands that the people who come here and use the car rental system when they come in for gasoline, instead of just servicing them and letting them go, if there was a little bit more friendship shown, a little more curiosity--are you enjoying Hawaii? where are you from? and so forth.

If we could all be more and more a part of it, I think we would enjoy the tourists more because we would understand them better, and I think that would just open up whole new avenues to them after that. And so limiting the tourist industry to just the people involved with the day to day work with the tourists is one thing, but I think Hawaii needs to, and the Hawaiians need to, see that the economy is good if

these people are bringing in money, because it makes it possible for our children to go to school, makes it possible for us to have a high standard of living.

S: And the tourists love to talk to anybody who lives here. Every once in a while on a street corner I'll see a perplexed one and I always volunteer, "Could I help you? Are you looking for something?" And they love to talk to people who live here, "Oh, what do you do? How long have you lived here? You mean the weather's this beautiful all year long?" And they just love having contact with people besides the tour guides.

K: Yes, I frequently stop and pick up, particularly older people if I see them walking along, because I'm convinced that they have no idea of distances around here. They end up at Punchbowl and they want to walk back to Waikiki. And I pick them up and they say they were looking for the bus. Well, the bus stop happens to be a quarter of a mile away from where they are, so I pick them up and take them all the way back to Waikiki, which amazes them to some extent. But I see the need for more and more of us to share. You know, if I went to Davenport, Iowa, as a complete stranger and nobody stopped to say, "Are you looking for something?" I would find this kind of strange. Although I don't expect everybody to stop, hopefully, somebody will.

And it's to our advantage that we have these resort complexes, and no matter what anyone complains about Waikiki--it's an isolated island by itself in the community and it's not going to bother us at all. For me to complain that there are thirty stories of hotel rooms--if they're coming here for just a few days and they're going to be in their hotel rooms only to sleep, it makes very little difference to them whether they're on the tenth floor or on the ground floor. And so while we put them in these dovecotes, they're satisfied with them. I wouldn't want to live that way perhaps, but they're satisfied with them while they're here. So I don't see why it should bother us locally.

S: Not from that standpoint, because we only have to go to Waikiki if we want to go to Waikiki. But what about the Outer Islands with the development? We've had so many problems with the conflicts--with people being upset with the developers for destroying either ecological or archaeological aspects of Hawaiian life.

K: Fifty years ago when nobody was living at one end of the island of say Maui, nobody cared about that. Perhaps local people went out there occasionally for a picnic or something and left rubbish around, didn't bother and so forth. Now that somebody wants to build a hotel out there, we suddenly become concerned about whether there's a heiau on the spot, whether there are any artifacts on the grounds, suddenly

we're all hyped up about this kind of thing. If there's a bona fide historical site, fine. But just to keep hoping that we're going to find something and delaying things for months and months because just in case we might, I think, is ridiculous. There can't be that many sites of such tremendous interest. And if they've disappeared in the meantime, I don't know why we have to resurrect them again, unless there's something very, very special.

Some of the conflicts on the Neighbor Islands are inevitable, and I'm not sure how you can determine any blame. Let's look at Waianae or Makaha. You know the Makaha Inn is a beautiful spot sitting up there--back off the beach. Down in the community are a lot of people who are finding it very difficult to live day after day. Economically, they're having a hard time. To have a limousine go by all air-conditioned, drive up to Makaha Inn, spend the days there, drive back and forth to the drugstore to pick up something--is this envy or jealousy on the part of some of the locals? Are they concerned about the disparity between that lifestyle and their own? I'm sure that a lot of this enters into it. Why are we being treated this way and how come God--of course, it's always easy to blame God--was good to them and not good to us and so forth and so on?

And you see that on some of the island resort areas. I guess in a way this is inevitable. Should we look at our educational system a little more carefully? What are we teaching in the schools, say in Waianae? Do they understand that there can be, and are, thousands of millionaires who made money in various ways, and whether they like it or not, that's the way things are nowadays; and to realize that because those people are very, very wealthy and these people are not, doesn't make them any more superior to us, but that it means that we've got to find our place in life, decide on our goals and work for them. And the sooner we get going on that process the better. How much do the schools do by way of helping the young people understand and appreciate the differences and say, "Well, those people have been successful and their parents were successful. Now you've got to work your way up the ladder, that's all."

S: Well, just within the last week there was an article again, and it crops up every so often, about the fact that our high school graduates go in for job interviews not appropriately dressed and speaking pidgin. And here we go back to the old problem with pidgin.

K: I'm not so sure pidgin is a problem. I think what is a problem is that you can have an individual who knows two, three or four languages and is able to converse with them. So if a child grows up and his father's Chinese and his mother's Hawaiian and he learns to speak both Chinese and Hawaiian besides English, he is a child with a tremendous

advantage. And, therefore, these extra languages open up whole new avenues of culture and so forth. But so does pidgin. And so if pidgin could be treated as another language, not a substitute language, but another language. When I went to grammar school, we all spoke pidgin and I had no difficulty when I went to college on the mainland, because you left it aside--that's not the way you spoke.

Perhaps in schools they're allowing them to speak pidgin in the classroom instead of saying, "It's not permitted once you come in the classroom. What you do on the playground that's fine, but when you're here, we're speaking good English because that's what you're going to have to learn to do when you get into the community as adults." I wonder if the teachers not only condone it, but are involved in many cases. And so I'm not so sure that pidgin is the real problem. Pidgin can be very helpful to individuals because it does give you a grasp of other people, other languages. So much of our pidgin is actually a combination of Chinese, Filipino, Portuguese and a few others.

S: I didn't mean to put down pidgin because I understand it's another form of communication, and also for the young people it's a peer thing and it's important to them in that respect. My own two haole daughters speak fluent pidgin. But they have to learn when to use it and when to put it aside.

K: But unfortunately and whether it's a question of whether they need more advisers, I'm not so sure that this is the way to go. If the teacher himself or herself can be a good role model, can clearly delineate for the students what is expected, what is demanded, what is permitted, they'll learn. But I wonder if in some areas we are careless about it because, well, these kids aren't going anywhere so what's the difference?

Now perhaps if I were teaching sixth grade in Hana, Maui, which is a very isolated community, I might not be as precise as I might be teaching a school in Nuuanu Valley. But nevertheless, I would hope that as a teacher on Maui I would be able to serve as a model to these students, so that they would understand that adults don't do certain things, or adults expect certain things, so when you move into that level this is what's going to be required, and let them enjoy their carefree, happy life, but also instill this understanding and appreciation of what's going to be expected when you're nineteen.

I wonder if a lot of these problems that keep arising ...those of us who are dealing with the younger ones need to be very thoughtful as to what we're expecting of them. There have been various studies done about school--Johnny can't read and that kind of thing, but there are some deeper

problems than whether we can write well or not. I saw a study recently done on the mainland in which they interviewed almost exactly 5,000 women and one of the questions asked was, "As you were growing up did you ever think of yourself as being a mother?" Forty percent had never ever thought about it and were not interested. I'm curious about that statistic. If that's true that last year out of a large group of women asked, forty percent never thought of becoming a mother--we celebrate Mother's Day--is there something happening to our understanding and appreciation of what life is all about? And so, I'd be more curious as to that kind of level. What are we doing?

Here in Hawaii I'd be very curious--I don't think that statistic would hold. Here, teenage pregnancy is awfully common, but then that raises an entirely different question--a question of the other side of the thing. What do we explain to them about this? Do they understand what motherhood really is all about? Is it, "Well, I'll just take a chance. Maybe, maybe not." And all that sort of thing. Obviously, these are areas of life where the adults in the community, whether they're professionals or not, whether they're government people or not, whether they're parents or not, have to be concerned with what is happening in our community at the teenage level. What are they expecting from life?

Now, if we were to approach them to get a good understanding...what do they think about adults? What is their perception of their parents and their parents' lifestyle? What's the average teenager's understanding and appreciation of his teachers? What is his understanding and appreciation of the law enforcement in the community? I'd be very curious to see what young people have to say, and I think we need to be concerned as to what they're saying.

I remember during the hippie movement--God love us--you know, they had us turned upside down and the more you listened to them the more interesting it became because they said, "You know, my father and mother told me I can't smoke, but they smoke. They told me that under no conditions could I ever drink alcohol, but they drink and they drink heavily. So what is wrong for me is right for them." And so the disparity that existed during that whole hippie movement--the young ones said, "There'll be no more of this," and just overthrew the whole thing.

And it came to us as a shock and we had to adjust to it. We were, in a sense, not realizing that we were being hypocritical. And again I wonder whether--well, that took us by surprise--I wonder if we're going to wait for the next surprise, or if we're going to see it before it happens? And, of course, here in Hawaii the presence of the hippies

became a real problem because they were children who were coming from elsewhere.

I remember three young ladies on Maui--hippies--living out under the trees, down at the beach. All three were daughters of Congressmen and their parents sent them a check regularly in order that they would stay in Hawaii and not embarrass the family back home. As long as the child was lost in Hawaii, "Here's the money. Stay there." And the message to the young people was clear, but in the meantime they were enjoying Hawaii. And enjoying a carefree lifestyle made possible by their parents. So the total contradiction in Hawaii of the hippie movement took local people by surprise. We couldn't figure out what these dang haole kids were doing here.

S: You had a highly visible number of them here?

K: Thousands, because this was the best place for them to live. They were sent out here and they were told, "As long as you stay there, you get this check. If you come back, you don't get any." And they thrived. But Hawaii was merciful to them. Hawaii, by and large, was good to them. We didn't understand them all the time, but because of the typical spirit of warmth and aloha, "If that's what they want to do, fine. We don't understand it. Okay." When they came around, they were treated well by people. Not always understood, but by and large, the general population left them to themselves and let them do whatever they wanted.

They gradually grew out of this. Today some of your young attorneys in the community are the former hippies of yesterday. Today some of your activists--and I don't mean this in a bad sense--those who are very interested in all kinds of things--are the former hippies of yesterday. They had a taste of all kinds of things when they were in the hippie movement. They came out of it--many of them--unscathed. Fortunately. But I wonder whether we missed it--didn't read the handwriting on the wall at that time--and then were baffled by what happened. Fortunately, it didn't create greater problems.

S: You used the word activist and I'm thinking of two people in two different areas. What's your reaction to people like say, James Albertini and Haunani Trask--both activists in different areas? How do you deal with these extremes?

K: Well, with all activists, as we had with the hippies, I think what you have are angry people. People who are angry at one thing or another. In the hippie movement, they were angry with their parents, or they were angry with the educational institution and they were rebelling against the universities and everything else. When you have angry

people, you don't always have logical people. On the other hand, some of the angry people are angry about something that means something to them. We may not always agree with it. Now if they can't get attention in one way, they're going to get it in some other way. And so there are various methods of getting attention.

I might not like what some of these individuals do. I understand that they can have this anger welling up within them and they find a need to express it, they find a need to protest, a need to make exorbitant statements in order to get attention. I wonder whether the solution to the problem is to give them some attention as soon as possible rather than drag this out forever. Find out what their real anger's about. Now the real anger may not be in the area in which they're talking. An activist may be very, very upset with a parent and a parent who was abusive.

Let me take the case of a military man who was a sergeant. He had several children, but he ran his house as if he was a sergeant. And, consequently, the kids just chafed under this. Now if the kids grew up with this dislike for their father and all he stands for--now he stands for military because he happened to be in the military--he stands for this and that and the next thing. That is all bad in a sense for them and they grow up with a distaste for that. It's unfair; it's not honest, but you can understand where they were coming from.

I wonder, as I say, with so many of these activists, if there's some way of sitting down with them and with a consummate amount of patience try to get them to voice (I guess would be the best word) what their real problems are and then steer them in the direction of taking care of the problems, if we couldn't avoid this?

Modern society is a violent society and, therefore, I guess we shouldn't be surprised at the activists. This is just another form of violence. I have a hard time dealing with any form of violence and yet, I suppose, one of these days we're all going to have to face it and work at solving what's causing this kind of anger. And whether I have a long range view--I could dislike the possibilities that may be caused by nuclear war and, therefore, with that as my goal I'm seen as antimilitary, as antiauthority, so I'm anti all kinds of things. What can I do about the nuclear holocaust that is possible? Is it as bad as they say it could be and will be, and is it inevitable and so forth? I'm not so sure. I'm not so sure that anybody wants to see a terrible holocaust take place and, therefore, to imagine that there are people sitting around making plans so that we can do this nuclear holocaust--I doubt that. Secondly, I doubt that the activists today are really knowledgeable about nuclear warfare and nuclear problems and so forth. Certainly the

recent tragedy in Russia [Chernobyl nuclear accident April 26, 1986] is going to exacerbate this problem--is going to create more problems for us.

But this is the time for thoughtful leaders to begin, I think, to look at underlying issues rather than just the questions that seem to be the important ones today. This is the time for intellectuals, for think tanks, for government leaders, politicians particularly, to begin to see that we cannot continue as if we were in 1960; that we are in a whole new era and our approach to things, our solutions to things, our meeting of problems have got to be faced in our time. And while the differences between my grandparents' era and mine are vast, the difference between 1986 and 1996 is going to be just as vast, because we're moving in a much more rapid system in every area of life today. The amount of knowledge available, the amount of information available, the amount of fancy equipment, technology and so forth available, is just completely out of hand. If you're just looking for the old-style control rules, there's no way we can.

But this is where the whole field of the educational level needs to really be much more serious. The complaint of whether Johnny can read or can't read is one thing, but the complaint of whether Johnny can or cannot understand what human life is all about in these days, is just as serious. Our educational approach is going to have to change. It's not a question of saying, "Look, what I'm giving you for these twelve years from first grade to senior in high school you'll need all that later in life," is a lot of baloney, because by the time they get from first grade and into the adult world, the whole society will have changed again.

S: How would you term it? Would you say we need a more humanistic approach?

K: I don't know. I can't think of terms. Certainly we need to understand human nature reacting to new situations. The child in second grade today can work a computer and I, who have a doctor's degree, I have all kinds of fancy education, I don't know the first thing about a computer. We're in two different worlds. And when that child is a dentist or a psychiatrist or whatever, his whole lifestyle's going to be different from anything that I ever thought of.

Now if I were in a classroom today, I'm afraid I would really have to think twice about what I'm doing about this little child and can't say, "Look, we have to teach you a few Hawaiian words so you can translate street names." That's going to be no good to him at all. When I say education, I don't necessarily mean only the school teachers or administrators. I think the whole question of what we're doing with these young people. And the clearest example I can think of is between that second grader and myself. So

there's fifty years difference between us in age, but there's much more difference in whole appreciation of what's happening around us.

In his day...I just saw a demonstration of talking to a computer and having a computer answer back. This is almost unbelievable. The whole question of being able to dial on the phone and see the person on television. That's within my lifetime. Before I die, this is going to happen. So the little children in second and third grade--the things that they're going to have to cope with aren't anything like the things that I had to grow up with. Because human society, particularly in the Western civilization, is moving so rapidly, that our scientific pace is so great, that I wonder if our cultural pace has been in step.

And if the child in second grade at Punahou is learning computers, what is the child at Waianae learning and what is going to be the discrepancy between the child at Waianae and the child at Punahou? What are we doing to society?

S: But you're still optimistic.

K: It's inevitable, it's inevitable. Human nature being what it is, it may take some hippie-type movement, it may take some protest perhaps, it may take some activist, but there's going to come a change. Hopefully, we don't have to go through that process. Hopefully, we can foresee the changes, at least foresee change taking place and keep step with it, rather than wait and finally have to be resurrected by some violent method. And if it's going to have to come from within, if it's going to have to come from a human understanding of a human person dealing with another human person, Hawaii is an ideal place for this kind of thing to take place.

And it should come fairly naturally to individuals here. With the cultural mix, with the aloha spirit, with all that Hawaii has to offer, this would almost seem to be ideal. And here in the Pacific, particularly where East meets West very clearly, and if the tourist industry is growing rapidly, heavens, we have a whole education system--five million people every year to educate as they come in and out of this place.

We're speaking now that it's almost inevitable that in 1986 there'll be five million tourists in Hawaii. Even if it stays that way for the next ten years, that's fifty million people we have to deal with. And what are we doing about it in the sense of: is there any warmth? is there any real sharing? is there any humanity involved in all this or is it just bussing them to something, bussing them back, collecting the money?

S: So we have an opportunity to accomplish a great deal, if we think in those terms.

K: And it's not limited to Hawaii. Arizona has much to offer; Tennessee has much to offer. But here in Hawaii you can see very easily, because it's an easy focus for so many people to gather. And isn't it strikingly interesting that the name of the island is Oahu which means "the gathering place?"

So it's pertinent. If we're going to gather here, do we gather just for the sake of gathering, or do we do something, do we learn to share and can we be helpful to one another?

S: And that's what life's supposed to be all about. Right?

To go back now. You had mentioned your great aunts, I believe, and these were the Prendergast sisters. Were these Eleanor and Mary?

K: Yes, and their mother was the one who composed the song Kaulana Na Pua, which was a family song first, but then it got out of hand and became a protest song a few years ago, and that now seems to have died out somewhat, although you still hear the song quite a bit.

S: Was that the family that had the musicians--the cousins who overshadowed you?

K: No, that's another group.

S: So you had musicians all over the place.

K: Well, with Hawaiians, music comes easy. They told me--they lived right up the street here in those early days--this would be in the 1890s--and the day that the Queen was overthrown, their mother was sitting on the porch alone, knitting or whatever, and the boys from the Royal Hawaiian Band came up School Street, because just a block down from their house was where the band had it's big building--where they practiced and kept their instruments and so forth. They were on their way to their regular practice when the word came out that the Queen had been overthrown.

So obviously the Hawaiians were puzzled. What happens now? When they saw her and knew her, they came in and sat down on the porch, the steps. Everybody sat down somewhat glumly because, "Was there any Royal Hawaiian Band left?" If she wasn't the Queen anymore, what happens now? So they sat down and someone said to her, "Ellen, what do we do now?" And typical of Hawaiians, she didn't answer. There was complete silence for quite a while.

Then she reached back and picked up her guitar and just strummed it. Whether it was her Catholic background or what it was, she gradually composed a chant, which was a kind of a monotone chant something like a Gregorian chant, and she composed this in Hawaiian. And that's the song Kaulana Na Pua. And the song says--na pua is the flowers, the plants of Hawaii--and the poetry is that just as the plants come out of the soil and survive out of the land, so the Hawaiians will. You needn't worry about them; they will survive no matter what happens. This is just like a storm blowing over. The Hawaiians will be famous--kaulana--just as the plants of Hawaii are. They will take the nourishment from the land and they will survive.

S: What a beautiful story.

K: Yes. And that's the Prendergasts. Now there's lots of stories and history behind families like that.

S: Do you have any other stories like that? (laughter) I liked that one.

K: Mary Prendergast, much more than Eleanor--although they were both very good in Hawaiian--Mary had an exceptionally keen memory and I'd ask her questions every now and then and she'd say, "I'm not sure, but I remember as a little girl your great-grandmother coming from Kona and coming to visit. And I remember her calling out from the fence--the gate--in Hawaiian, and she used this sentence and you see the word she used..." And then she'd take it apart.

But they had keen memories. Words had special meanings for them. And she didn't forget the word. And I thought, "Oh, this is a little bit exaggerated to remember one word from way back." And then suddenly at another family gathering, another branch of the family said something to me about my grandmother and I said, "Oh, I remember her saying such and such." And then it dawned upon me that I was doing the same thing--that a word that had been used by my grandmother had made a deep impression on me that didn't come to the fore until much later, when I began to appreciate what it really meant.

But you have this kind of thing happen very easily if you are using a language that is poetical, that has more than one word. For example, we can say, "book." Now that's not very poetical, but for the Hawaiian there was no book and so they had to make a word. They didn't understand the notion of book. Once they got the question of book--the first real book they saw was a bible. Then when they were dealing with foods, someone laughed and looking at tripe said, "Aw, this is a bible," because the tripe unfolded the same way the bible did. So to this day you have baibala tripe. The bible tripe. But it was their reaction to what

they saw: the paging--the opening of the bible to them--and the cleaning, the opening of the tripe.

And when they concocted the word, there was not a question of starting a new word. They were just communicating with somebody and, in a sense referring to, and it could have been at a church luau, that now we have the bible. Here's the bible. So that words are easily manufactured, put together, concocted, developed in a Hawaiian setting. And so every now and then, when you go to some of these places--you don't see tripe very often--and if there is tripe, I'll generally ask, "Is it baibala?" And I'm amazed as to how many understand it and how many don't--as to what baibala tripe is.

S: But unfortunately there'll probably be less and less of this as the years go on.

K: Perhaps, perhaps. But you know people like me talk; too much at times, I guess, and stories like this get handed on. And just as I heard them from old-timers, others have heard it from me. I don't think it will die out. I don't think it's as widespread as perhaps many people would like it, and I'm not so sure that that's the best way to hand things on. They're easily misunderstood. If they're kept within their own context, they're better understood.

S: It's been an education.

Another interesting story that I read was that when you left the office of president of the Hawaiian Civic Club, a pair of famous cufflinks was presented to you.

K: My goodness, yes. I still have them. They were given to me as a thank-you offering for serving as president.

S: I thought it was such a remarkable gift. I was really impressed by that. Do you want to explain that?

K: Well, when King Kalakaua ordered a new uniform--a white duck uniform--and the buttons for the uniform were all gold with his crest--his coat of arms--on them. And later on, years later, someone in the family had the coat but, of course, the coat got old and shrivelled, so they took the buttons off. Two of those buttons were made into cufflinks for me. And, as I say, I still have them.

S: I thought that was a wonderful gesture.

K: Yes. I don't know what I'm going to do with them. I keep wondering about the Iolani Palace. They're collecting all the things from the palace days. Now I don't know whether cufflinks are any advantage to them at all, but one of these days maybe I'll take it up with them.

S: That would be a good choice.

K: Yes, much has been done at the palace. Most of it exceptionally fine work. Some of it I don't particularly care for. I don't like to go down there because I make everybody so nervous, apparently. I took some friends down and went through the tour with them, and the young lady who was the docent was a nervous wreck. And she finally explained to the people that she was nervous--because not only had I performed her marriage, but she was nervous because of my understanding of Hawaiian history and whether she was doing well or not. And I said to her, "Don't you worry about it. You keep going. You're doing fine." I know she was still nervous, so I'm a little bit sensitive about that.

Much has been done and it's excellent work. I don't think at the moment the tourist industry is fully aware of the value of the Iolani Palace, and maybe it's just as well that they aren't. Maybe it's just as well that we aren't running a million people through every year until the thing is completely under control, because you could spoil it again.

S: But I think they've done an outstanding job considering what they had to start with. How it had been let go and the fact that they've been able to reach out and acquire these things, get them back where they belong. I give them credit. I think they've done a great job.

K: I kind of grew up in the palace. Eleanor Prendergast, of course, worked there all her life. She was the federal officer issuing passports out of the governor's office. The only place out of the United States you could get an American passport. For years, that's what she did upstairs in the governor's office. And I had other relatives working in the building, so I spent a lot of time in the building. But I'm glad to see the fine work that's been done there. But I hope and I'm convinced that they will, continue to do very much.

I'm not so sure that I agree with some of the things. I have some misgivings about the sidewalks that were put out on the grounds. They tore up one sidewalk to put one a few feet away, and I didn't think that was terribly important. I would be more interested in the building itself. Now maybe after they've finished the work on the gardens and so forth, I'll be much more appreciative of what they've done. It's a jewel that's set there, and now I regret that the Capitol Building itself is so close to it. It kind of overshadows it, overpowers it, in a sense. Nevertheless, it is a ...

S: It's a wonderful example of what can be done when people put their minds together and work together to accomplish something like that.

K: And it's rich with history. It's rich with some very, very beautiful history that still needs to be understood and shared.

S: And while they may not be perfect, I think the docents try to do a really good job and people are going to go away with a little bit more than when they entered the front door.

K: It's an enriching experience, there's no doubt, as you go through it.

END OF TAPE 2/SIDE 2

SUBJECT INDEX

- 1 Birth at Kona, Hawaii
Illness during infancy
- 2 Early childhood in Honolulu
- 3 Education at St. Louis School
Seminary training in California
- 3-4 Return to Hawaii; ordination; early parish work
- 4 Further education at the Catholic University of
America, Washington, D. C.
Positions as secretary to the bishop and chancellor
for the diocese
Anecdote: Christmas card to classmate in Alaska
- 5 Description of duties while in Alaska
Return to Hawaii
- 6 Trustee of the Queen Liliuokalani Trust
Activity with the Hawaiian Civic Clubs
- 6-11 Interest in Hawaiian language; Hawaiian music;
Hawaiian place names
- 11 Relationship with grandparents
- 12 Anecdote: visit with the Aiu sisters in Kona
- 13 The purpose of the Queen Liliuokalani Trust
- 13-14 Problems facing contemporary Hawaiians
- 15-18 Discussion of early Hawaiian culture
- 18 Anecdote: example of Hawaiian legend
- 19 Evolution of educational process in Hawaii
- 20 Explanation of lomilomi salmon
- 21-24 Appreciation of Hawaiian culture; leis, hula,
music
- 24-26 Relation of language to culture
- 26-29 Respect for cultures and cultural exchanges
- 29-30 Work of Dr. Samuel Elbert and Mary Kawena Pukui
- 30 Position with First Hawaiian Bank

- 31-32 Changes in corporate community responsibility
- 33-38 Discussion of agriculture and tourism
- 38-39 Role of pidgin in today's society
- 39-41 Discussion of educational and parental attitudes
- 41-42 Discussion of activists
- 42-44 Need for re-evaluation of goals of education
- 45 Anecdote: composition of Kaulana Na Pua
- 46 Early impressions of Hawaiian words
- 47 Anecdote: gift of cufflinks made from the buttons
 of King Kalakaua's jacket
- 48-49 Discussion of restoration of Iolani Palace

THE WATUMULL FOUNDATION ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

The Watumull Foundation Oral History Project began in June of 1971. During the following seventeen months eighty-eight people were taped. These tapes were transcribed but had not been put in final form when the project was suspended at the end of 1972.

In 1979 the project was reactivated and the long process of proofing, final typing and binding began. On the fortieth anniversary of the Watumull Foundation in 1982 the completed histories were delivered to the three repositories.

As the value of these interviews was realized, it was decided to add to the collection. In November of 1985 Alice Sinesky was engaged to interview and edit thirty-three histories that have been recorded to mark the forty-fifth anniversary of the Foundation.

The subjects for the interviews are chosen from all walks of life and are people who are part of and have contributed to the history of Hawaii.

The final transcripts, on acid-free Permalife bond paper and individually Velo-bound, are deposited and are available to scholars and historians at the Hawaii State Archives, the Hamilton Library at the University of Hawaii and the Cooke Library at Punahou School. The tapes are sealed and are not available.

August 1987